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THE BOMBARDIER.

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AUTHOR OF 'PIERRE AND HIS PEOPLE,' 'MRS FALCHION,' 'THE TRAIL OF THE SWORD,' &c.

CHAPTER I.

'I WAS with Raglan at the Alma, sir,' said the Bombardier, bringing his stick down smartly on the wooden pavement, and proudly straightening his shoulders. Keble Graves, the newly arrived curate, bowed respectfully, as though interested; but one or two loungers shrugged their shoulders and walked away: they knew that when the Bombardier was started upon this theme, there would be no fair division of the conversation. As an oracle the Bombardier was confident and even versatile; but he too often frowned over ramparts of knowledge when he ought to have smiled.

Hitherto, his position had been impregnable. He had checked the aspiring qualities of the aged rector's ritual; he had exposed the limitations of the schoolmaster's historical gifts; he had in an elaborate document, 'private and confidential,' corrected the theology of the Methodist pastor, and he had privately admonished the Presbyterian minister concerning his 'latitudinarianism, sir!' His waistcoat pockets were stuffed with newspaper scraps of argumentative value, and the suddenness of their appearance, and the intimidation which he threw into his manner, was confusing to his adversaries.

The village would often have found him impossible, were it not for one circumstance. There was only one graveyard in the village for the Protestant denominations, and it belonged to the Methodist body. But all controversial enmity was abandoned at the gateway of this plot, lying peacefully behind the old Wesleyan chapel. It was a plain and dreary chapel, with a harsh-toned bell; it was an unpretentious burying-ground. There were no granite monuments, no stately columns, no

splendid marble slabs; there was but one fine tombstone.

It was here that the Bombardier laid aside his vanity. Looking at it, the village, usually uncompromising, lacking in sensitiveness, became considerate. There were no trees in this burying-ground, no shrubbery at all—only long grass growing from gravelly soil, reaching up about white head-stones; all new, all startlingly recent; for the village was only twenty-five years old.

But beside this one grave, standing quite alone just behind the church, there grew a lilac bush, and on it in the summer time, flowers were always blooming. Its head-stone was a white marble shaft with a draped urn surmounting it, and the inscription ran:

SACRED TO THE MEMORY

OF

ANTHONY SHEWELL, M.D.,

Only son of Bombardier Matthew Shewell;
who saved the lives of twelve children
of this village on the 12th of August 1887,
and died of his injuries on the same day.

He was born in the year 1862, and served his

Country, as a Lieutenant of
the 20th Battalion of Infantry, during the North-west
Rebellion of 1885, being grievously wounded at the
battle of Batoche, and losing thereby
the use of one arm. His grateful
fellow-citizens, of all denominations, erect
this memorial over his body, which was here
buried with military honours on the 15th
of August 1887.

'And thine age shall be clearer than the noon-day; thou
shalt shine forth, thou shalt be as the morning.'

Job, xi. 17.

The curate knew this portion of the old man's history, and he said in reply to the Bombardier: 'That was a hot day at the Alma—a brave fight, Bombardier.'

'Hot day! Brave fight, sir! Never any finer in the days of Alexander. Waterloo was right, and Lucknow an out-and-outer, but Alma was the *coup-de-grace* of valour, sir!'

He drew back and brought his stick down savagely on the pavement again, as if expecting opposition, and was squaring himself for war.

After a moment of imperious waiting, he continued: 'If you would honour me, sir, in my humble quarters, we could discuss this great topic free from intrusion—from vulgar intrusion,' he added, as some loungers laughed. He recognised the voice—which said something about 'an eruption of buttons,' referring to the numerous buttons on the Bombardier's coat—as that of Abel Chown the fiddler. His eye flashed angrily. 'We have intelligence in this village, sir, but we have also minds that never rise above fiddle-faddle and fiddle-de-dee!'

He turned grandly away, the curate following. They crossed the long covered bridge, and, taking a path by the river-side, were soon at 'The Fort,' as the old soldier's little house was called. On a staff near the door a bit of colour was always flying, and on certain anniversary days, and on Sunday, the Union Jack flapped on the breeze from the river. The house was apart from all others, and higher than all others, in the village. In position and peculiarity it accorded with the Bombardier's personality. The living apartment—dining-room, library, and drawing-room all in one—was simply and severely furnished. A map of the Crimea hung on the wall, and a smaller one of the Alma itself was beside it, evidently drawn by the old soldier. Near these hung two artillery sabres crossed, a knapsack with its long leather straps and white facings, a pair of epaulets, a field glass, and an engraving of Lord Raglan. Upon a rough side-table lay a Bible, a copy of Shakespeare's plays, an ancient medical treatise, a compendium called *Every Man his Own Lawyer*, a set of the Consolidated Statutes, and a History of the Crimean War. Beyond these again lay a number of clay pipes, and between the leaves of the Bible hid a pair of spectacles. Everything was in perfect order—no dust in the corners, no cobwebs on the ceiling, no rust on the sabres; and the heels of the pair of top-boots under the table were as faithfully polished as the toes. The keen observer would also have noticed here and there the touch of a woman's fingers—an embroidered curtain to some shelves, a pretty case for shaving-paper, and a fresh bunch of flowers in a tumbler on the window-sill.

The old man saw the flowers, and his usually grave face relaxed; then his stick tapped the floor gently.

'She never forgets the Bombardier,' he said, and he nodded proudly towards them. 'Never was a better girl than Sophie!' The curate looked at him encouragingly, and the soldier

added with a slight trembling of the lips: 'She and Antony—yes, to have married her! Been like a daughter to me. Comes day in, day out, these years gone, to say a word or leave something.'

His eyes were on the flowers and his face seemed stern, but the sternness was only a frowning effort at repression. He stood so a moment in a kind of dream, and then brusquely offered his visitor a chair.

'Tell me something about your son, Bombardier,' the curate said gently. 'I believe he was much admired and beloved.'

'Ask his fellow-citizens,' said the old soldier proudly. 'Read what the journals of his country say of him.'

He opened a drawer of the table, and took from it several papers, and handing them over, said with a childlike honesty and vanity: 'Had his old father's daring, sir.'

Presently the curate rose, and, coming to the old man, laid a palm on his shoulder, and said: 'Bombardier, he lived his threescore years and ten.'

The soldier mutely answered by a nod, but he did not raise his head.

'You will meet again some day at parade, Bombardier?'

'At bugle call and parade!' was the slow reply.

A shadow fell across the sunlight at the door, and, turning, they saw a girl upon the threshold, bearing in her hand a dish of wild strawberries. Her eyes were full of a softened light; her face had a delicate colour. The Bombardier rose and said: 'Sophie! Sophie!—Mr Graves, this is Sophie!'

The girl flushed slightly, and straightway greeted the curate with a more graceful bow than might be looked for in a country village. Her father, while himself but a storekeeper, had married a clergyman's orphan daughter, and though the mother was long since dead, the girl carried in her veins the strain of breeding, with its self-possession and composure.

'I've brought you some strawberries, Bombardier,' she said. 'I've good news for you also. Mr Quackenbush's brother, the sergeant, who fought at Tel-el-Kebir, is coming here to live. He's been pensioned. So you'll have a comrade now.'

Here she drew nearer to the soldier. 'Just think, Bombardier—and now she tapped his arm playfully, though a close observer might have seen apprehension in her eyes—'there you'll go marching down the street together, Bombardier Shewell, the hero of the Alma, doing garrison duty with Sergeant Quackenbush of Tel-el-Kebir.'

The soldier's brow darkened, and he said excitedly: 'What's Tel-el-Kebir to Alma, tell me that? What's a wretched rice-guzzling crew of Soudanese to fifty thousand Russians? If our men take a barb-wire fence now, they're heroes—bah! If they make prisoners of a dozen niggers, and dethrone a moth-eaten chief, they get promotion or the V.C. They're a pampered lot, sir! They're muddlers, and highfliers, and mollies, sir! and sergeant or no sergeant, I'll tell him so in his teeth when I face him. I'll—'

But the girl put her fingers gently on his lips.

CHAPTER II.

Sergeant Quackenbush arrived ; a well-clothed, well-proportioned man of medium height, with grizzled hair, close-cropped moustache, and honest, hearty manner. The village was small, his coming was a matter of importance, and as he alighted from the stage-coach and walked up the street, with its wooden side-walks and projecting sign-boards, faces appeared at doors and windows, and children stood at the corners and gaped.

A few days after the sergeant's arrival, the two soldiers met in the village post-office, which was also a shoe-shop. The Bombardier was handed his weekly newspaper, and with his most martial air, retired to his corner among the 'cowhides and copper-toes.' He had just opened the paper and raised his large brass-rimmed eyeglass, when 'Sergeant Quackenbush ! Sergeant Quackenbush !' was whispered down the shop.

The Bombardier's frown deepened, his dignity grew. The sergeant was a rough, genial man. His oily, loud 'How are you ! how are you !' had a sound of the canteen and the sergeants' mess. It was backed, too, by a glow of health and robustness, in contrast to the Bombardier's spare frame and intellectual face.

The postmaster came from behind the counter. 'Sergeant !' he said impressively—'Sergeant Quackenbush, come this way, if you please.' Then, in a loud stage whisper : 'Bombardier Shewell—must be introduced.'

The Bombardier did not put down his paper. He appeared absorbed, and he started, as if roused from abstraction, when the postmaster said oracularly : 'Bombardier, I am proud to introduce two veterans to each other. Bombardier Shewell, Sergeant Quackenbush !—a wave of the hand—'Sergeant Quackenbush, Bombardier Shewell !—and a wave of the other hand. Then the postmaster rubbed both palms on his leather apron, adjusted his spectacles, and waited.

The sergeant frankly held out his hand, but the other with grave ostentation lifted his hat, and said : 'To have the honour, Sergeant Quackenbush !'

The sergeant's bluff good-nature seemed checked. He flushed, but he raised his hand, and, with a brusque military salute, said : 'Very proud, very proud, Bombardier !' The sergeant waited for the other to lead in conversation, but the Bombardier resumed his reading. The sergeant turned smartly on his heel, thrust his hands down in his pockets, and said to the postmaster, as though to ease the embarrassment : 'Infernal hot weather, sir !' regardless of the fact that he was addressing a local preacher, a leader at quarterly meetings, and the head of the Wesleyan choir.

As the postmaster drew back with a half-confused smile, he followed up the remark with : 'Hell, sir, hell, cinders and all !' and added thereto a clap on the back.

This straightway lost the sergeant an adherent. But if the sergeant thereby made for himself a secret enemy, he gained two friends

on the instant : Abel Chown, the fiddler ; and Ira Tinsley, the keeper of Tinsley's Hotel. Both were potent in their spheres. Abe, the fiddler, was a power among the young people.

Presently the Bombardier, giving a preparatory ahem, began to read aloud an extract from the newspaper he held : 'Our small but well-equipped force in Burma seems to have been completely annihilated. Are we depending now too much upon repeating-rifles and Nordenfelt guns, and not enough upon the force of numbers, shoulder to shoulder prowess, and the wide-eyed generalship which relieved Lucknow and conquered Acre ? Is it possible that, even in war, machinery is displacing the old Norse strength, which has made and kept England what she is ? Or does the secret lie in the supineness of a Government, which sets a thousand men the task of keeping in subjection, and, if need be, defeating in battle, a hundred times their number.'

At the beginning of this, the sergeant turned round with soldierly alertness ; in the middle of it, he snapped his finger ; when it was finished, he broke into a laugh of good-humoured disdain.

The Bombardier fiercely folded up the paper and put it in his pocket. Then he grasped his stick firmly, and frowned at the sergeant. 'Well, sir,' he said, 'what are you guffawing at ?'

'At that beggarly rotten nonsense. You don't stand by that villainous bosh, do you ?'

'Sir,' said the other, 'the glory of the British arms is dimmed—I will not say tarnished, sir, but dimmed. We are now an army of boys—boys ! We kill by clockwork now, not by muscle, bayonet, and sabre. When I was with Raglan at the Alma, sir—'

'Oh, Alma be damned !' interrupted the other impetuously.

'Be damned, sir ? Alma be damned, sir ?' The old man's voice was thick with wrath, his fingers clutched his stick, and, as he heard Abe the fiddler laugh, a pulse of anger convulsed it upward menacingly.

At that moment a girl came in between, and her sweet voice said to the sergeant softly : 'Remember, he is old !' and then more loudly and persuasively to the other : 'Bombardier, I've been looking for you to row me across the river, the current is so strong !'

She put her arm through his, the stick was lowered slowly, and the tide of public feeling, which had been running strongly against the Bombardier, was stayed by the smile upon her lips. The fighting spirit in the sergeant's eyes melted away, and the Bombardier now only muttered to himself. He did not refuse to go, when she said : 'I'm in a hurry, Bombardier, and I promised to take the boat over.'

He walked with her through the silent onlookers, head erect, eyes turning neither to right nor left. The man of Tel-el-Kebir, as they passed him, said with honest straightforwardness : 'The Alma was all right, Bombardier ; it was only a soldier's chaff—and there you are !'

But the Bombardier, with a quirk of the lips, which showed more anger than forgiveness, retorted : 'Men and soldiers fought at the

Alma, sir. We had no babies or *canaille* there !' Perhaps none present, save the sergeant, knew what *canaille* meant, but it sounded scornful and malicious.

As the two disappeared through the doors, the fiddler said : 'I'd got two new tunes for her weddin', an' it never came off !' He blinked a moisture from his eyes, which was part whisky, part feeling. Sergeant Quackenbush nodded thoughtfully and replied : 'I'll be friends with him, if he'll let me ; and I'll guard-room this temper of mine.'

THE LAND OF PALM OIL.

ALTHOUGH the British settlements in the West of Africa have for long been the scenes of active commercial and missionary effort, the western portion of the Dark Continent has not become so familiar to the general reader as the central and eastern portions. For this there are several reasons, the chief of which probably is that no sensational books of travel have originated in the Land of Palm Oil. Yet, the Niger Territory is so important an adjunct to the British Crown—being not merely a Sphere of Influence but a well-defined Protectorate—that a little attention may well be devoted to its features.

The Niger River discharges itself into the Gulf of Guinea by a number of streams which percolate through the swampy, fever-haunted Delta of the Niger. Each of these river-mouths has a name of its own, but collectively they are called the Oil Rivers, because upon them are stationed 'the Factories' (that is, stores) and agencies of the traders in palm oil.

The largest of these mouths is the Nun, and it is this which is most used in connection with the navigation of the Niger proper. Near the entrance of the Nun is Akassa, the great dépôt-station for the whole of the Niger territories, and the place of loading and discharge for the Liverpool steamers. Akassa is a busy place, with a constant coming and going of sea and river steamers, and an interminable crowd of 'natives' rolling an endless stream of palm-oil casks along the wharfs, or carrying great tusks of ivory to the ships. It has a background of dark, impenetrable forest, and in itself is brighter and prettier looking than the dismal, malarial stations on the other Oil Rivers (such as Bonny, Calabar, &c.), where Nature seems to be at her ghastliest and man at his worst. At Akassa the officials of the Royal Niger Company have even attempted gardens and other works of civilisation and culture ; but vegetation does not thrive, and the vapours from the surrounding mangrove swamps make the climate very enervating for Europeans. As a consequence, the permanent white residents are few, although the station is usually well filled either with new-comers or with invalided and time-expired men waiting to get 'home.' The natives of the Akassa district belong to the Brass tribes, and they were formerly dangerous savages, whose chief occupation in life was in causing and in plundering wrecks ; but now they seem to be inoffensive enough in their villages among the mangroves.

Authorities differ as to the origin of the name of the river, which Ptolemy called *Niger*, and other old writers *Niger*. The old theory that the name is the Latin for 'black' seems now generally abandoned ; and Dr Brown's theory seems the most reasonable one—that the name is probably derived from the same root as the Berber *Ghir*, which is applied to many streams in North Africa. The river is, however, nowhere called Niger by the tribes along its course, but by a variety of names (such as Joliba, Kworra, Ujimini, &c.), all or most of which just signify 'The Great Water.'

Prior to Mungo Park's journey in 1796 from Gambia to Boussa on the Middle Niger, almost nothing was known about this river ; and after Park, not much more was discovered until the brothers Lander in 1830 succeeded in descending the stream all the way from Boussa to the Nun mouth. Thereupon followed numerous trading expeditions, and in 1841 and 1854, some Government surveys of the Niger and its affluent the Benue were made. Meanwhile, commercial establishments, both British and French, were multiplying ; and in 1882 these were all amalgamated in an English company, which a few years later was incorporated and chartered as the Royal Niger Company, charged with the political and general administration over the whole region in the basins of the Niger and Benue, of which Great Britain assumed the Protectorate in 1885. Sir Claude Macdonald was in 1889 despatched by the Government on a special mission to make personal examination of the condition of the Niger territories, and the views of the various kings and chiefs ; and an interesting account of this mission was written by Captain Mockler-Ferryman, who acted as Sir Claude Macdonald's secretary.

For some distance above Akassa, the country remains flat and the scenery uninteresting, if not indeed positively dismal. But after passing the confluence with the Wari River both the surroundings and the people improve. The inhabitants of the Niger Delta are of poor physique and a very low type of humanity—all fetish worshippers, and many of them cannibals. The farther one gets from the coast the higher do the tribes seem to rise in the human scale, although when one reaches Lokoja, which is the point of junction of the Niger and its great arm the Benue, one meets the advancing wave of Mohammedanism, which is spreading down from the interior towards the sea, with its usual accompaniment of slave-raiding horrors. On the Delta, too, missionary enterprise seems to have effected little, if any, change in the people ; but higher up the river one finds encouraging results.

The palm oil, which is the staple product of the Lower Niger, as of the West Coast generally, is obtained from a wild palm. The natives use it both for cooking, for burning, and for smearing their bodies with. It is to them, indeed, a great deal more than ghee is to the Hindu. The fruit of the tree grows in large prickly clusters, and its skin is of a bright red or orange colour, turning to yellow when ripe. The pulp is rather bitter in taste, and is reddish-white in colour. Within the fruit is a

stone or kernel, about the size of a filbert. The natives, gathering the fruit when ripe, bruise it gently in a wooden mortar, and then boil it with water in large caldrons; whilst simmering, it is stirred with a stick, to separate the pulp from the kernels, which sink to the bottom and are reserved for other uses. The oil, which floats on the surface of the water as the boiling proceeds, is skimmed off, and placed in earthenware vessels.

The Niger affords two kinds of palm oil. The one is of the consistency of butter, and is called 'hard' oil, and for this the only market is England. The other is liquid, and is called 'soft oil,' and for this the highest price is obtained in all the European markets. There is hardly any difference in the quality, but only in the method of preparation. The buying price on the river ranges from five pounds to six pounds ten shillings per cask of two hundred and twenty gallons; and it is calculated that about eight thousand tons are annually exported from the Niger to Europe, where it is employed in making candles, soap, railway-grease, &c. Both the trading and the transport to the 'Factories' is carried on chiefly by women, after the manner of the noble savage; and the streams of females, each with a pot of palm oil on her head and a baby on her back, are among the every-day sights of the country. At the Factories the oil is carefully measured by the agents, and is paid for in salt or cotton cloth. Then it is casked and stored in the station, waiting for transport down the river, to be put on board the ocean steamers at Akassa.

The commodity next in importance in the export trade of the Niger is ivory, although this can hardly be regarded as an increasing trade. It is mostly in the hands of Hausa (native) merchants, who convey it vast distances.

Few persons who finger their ivory-handled knives at dinner think of the enormous distances that have been traversed by the smooth pleasant-feeling material, of the incalculable labour it represents, and of the suffering, and perchance bloodshed, which have marked its transit since it fell with some mighty elephant in a remote African jungle. Some who know Central Africa say that if it were not for ivory, the raiding and selling of slaves would soon cease. If this be true, then this beautiful product of nature stands in the civilised world as the representative of the traffic in human flesh, which annually makes countless thousands mourn.

Not until the traveller gets well up the river towards Lokoja, where the stream of the Benue unites with that of the Middle Niger, does the scenery become at all romantic, but at Lokoja (which is peopled mostly by Mohammedans) there is a fine stretch of mountain and forest view, and an immense sheet of water, formed by the junction of the streams, more than three miles wide. Lokoja is an important centre both in trade, in missionary enterprise, and in the administration of the Niger Territories, and it is here that one encounters in full force the wave of Islamism, which has flowed down from the north, and which is now struggling with Christianity for mastery over the native

tribes. The problem of the future is how far British influences and methods will succeed in checking its further flow towards the coast. Captain Ferryman seems to think that more drastic measures than teaching and preaching will be needed, and that, in fact, Islam will not be defeated there without force of arms sooner or later; but although the struggle may be long, he has no doubt of the ultimate result.

Leaving Lokoja on the left and steaming up the Benue River, one enters a stream that was absolutely unknown to Europeans until sixty years ago. The mouth of it was discovered by the brothers Lander in 1830; and in 1833, Messrs Laird and Oldfield managed to paddle up to a place called Dagbo, which is about one hundred miles above the confluence with the Niger. No further attempt was made for nearly twenty years, until Dr Barth crossed over from Lake Chad, and struck the upper waters at Yola, a place which now marks the eastern limit of the British Protectorate. Indeed, the Benue was for long supposed to flow out of Lake Chad; but this is now known not to be the case.

Trade on the Benue only dates from 1874, and has not as yet attained great dimensions; but the land along this river is reported to be of great promise, and it is believed that this will ultimately prove one of the most remunerative portions of the Niger Territories.

One of the principal items of trade here is rubber, which is thus collected. The natives make an incision in the tree, and allow the sap to flow over their naked arms until it forms a thick coating. When this has hardened, it is scraped off and rolled into balls, which are known as 'Niger lumps,' and which are taken to the Factories, where they are worth in goods the equivalent of ninety to one hundred pounds per ton. This rubber sells in England at from one shilling to two shillings per pound, according to quality—for there are many varieties of the rubber-tree.

Shea butter is another product. This is obtained from the Shea-tree (*Bassia Parkii*), a handsome tree resembling an American oak, the fruit of which is a nut about the size of a walnut. The treatment is much the same as that followed in the manufacture of palm oil, above described, and the solid oil, or butter, has medicinal properties which the natives appreciate. In market value, Shea butter is pretty much that of palm oil, and in England it is used largely in the manufacture of ointment, although it has numerous other uses.

One of the principal tribes of the Lower Benue basin is the Bassa tribe—an industrious, energetic, and muscular people, who are heathens and idol worshippers. Not much is known of their customs, but their mode of burial is curious. They wrap the corpse in white cloth and place it in the grave in a standing position along with a bag of provisions for the journey to the other world. A whole month is spent in mourning, and then there is a general meeting of the relatives, who spend a day in feasting and dancing.

One of the chief towns on the Benue is Loko, a clean place of some four thousand inhabitants, composed of a collection of round-topped huts,

like haystacks, fenced by matting seven feet high. This is both an important station of the Royal Niger Company and also the capital of the Mohammedan State of Nassarawa, which is ruled over by an Emir. Of this potentate Captain Ferryman gave the following description :

'The Emir himself rode down to the river bank, surrounded by a large company of armed men ; their horses were poor weedy-looking things, and weighed down with huge high-peaked saddles, gaily decorated with Hausa leather-work, but nevertheless they *were* horses, and about the first we had seen in West Africa. The Emir himself was clothed in voluminous garments of white and dark blue Kano cotton. On his head was a turban of white, hung round with numerous leather-sewn charms ; and hiding his features was the usual face-cloth of dark muslin. Embroidered slippers and a heavy cross-hilted sword completed his dress as a Fula chief. He was received with much ceremony, a guard of honour of the Royal Niger Constabulary being drawn up on deck ; though I am not certain that he understood at first what it meant, and he probably thought that he had fallen into a trap. However, his litham concealed any fear his face might have shown, and when he entered the Commissioner's presence he seemed quite at home. The Emir himself is a man of about thirty-five years of age, and his Wuzeer, who appears to be the astuter of the two, is perhaps a trifle younger. Both, I should say, are good samples of ruffians of the deepest dye, though they were the pink of politeness during the interview, showering down compliments on our heads, which taxed the ingenuity of our Hausa interpreter to reply to in corresponding terms. However, half an hour saw the business through ; and we, at all events, were not sorry when the Emir rose, for his retinue, who had crowded in after him, were of the unwashed order, and our little saloon, for the nonce the durbar-hall, was rapidly becoming laden with a most pungent African bouquet.'

The grievance of this worthy was that the Royal Niger Company would not sell him rifles and ammunition, whereby he might follow the custom of his father and grandfather in hunting down the pagan tribes and capturing slaves. Needless to say that the Commissioner of 'The Great White Queen' gave him to understand that she hated that sort of thing, would not allow it, and had forbidden her subjects to sell arms for such purposes.

The Benue headquarters of the Niger Company are at a place called Ibi, a town belonging to the Juko tribe, who have succeeded in escaping from the Mohammedan influence which oppresses surrounding tribes, and have placed themselves under British protection. The whole country about here is fertile and well wooded. Above Ibi, the river is a magnificent stream more than a mile wide, with a succession of important native States stretching along both banks. Here is one little sketch of the physical aspects :

'Few villages or inhabitants were seen during our day's run of fifty miles, the country still remaining densely wooded, with occasional open plains of high grass. At dusk, the river had

slightly narrowed, and we lay between two high black walls of impenetrable forest : once we thought we heard a lion's distant roar, but otherwise all was magnificently still—not a ripple on the water, not a rustle among the trees—and as we sat on deck gazing pensively into the black night, the moon, almost at the full, rose gradually above the dark belt of forest, and shed a silvery lustre over the water. It was one of the grandest night-scenes I can remember, and certainly one which can never be equalled out of the tropics.'

Farther on, the country becomes more open and more thickly populated. Cultivation, too, is actively pursued, as also a number of native industries such as leather-working, brass-working, and cloth-dyeing with native indigo. Altogether life on the Benue seems on a higher plane than in the basin of the Lower Niger. Yola, the capital of the Mohammedan State of Adamawa, through which passes the boundary-line of the Anglo-German agreement of 1886, lies at the foot of a fine group of mountains, on the slopes of which it is proposed to establish a sanatorium for the European traders. Above Yola, the Benue presents much variety of scenery and character ; but although the mission was continued for some distance up the stream, we shall stop at the boundary-line. Suffice it to say that much interesting exploration was done, both on the upper waters of the Benue and also on the Middle Niger (or Kworra) above Lokoja.

In conclusion, it may be said that the commercial potentiality of this region is limited in range ; but it remains to be seen if any mineral resources can be discovered, or cultivation developed so as to make agriculture a remunerative industry. The climate of the Niger Delta is, as it has always been, deadly for Europeans ; but beyond the junction of the Niger and Benue it will compare favourably with India. In these inner parts Europeans may safely reside for three or four years at a time, and even longer if hill sanatoriums be established. But there is no field for European colonisation in the Niger Territories.

A N E L E C T R I C S P A R K.*

By G. MANVILLE FENN.

CHAPTER XIV.—FOREIGN POLICY.

'WHAT I expected,' said Wynyan to himself as he walked through the Enclosure. 'Fate plays strange pranks with us.' Then getting into the Mall, where it was comparatively lonely among the big elms and planes, he walked slowly up and down thinking of his position. Only a few days before with everything bright and hopeful, a grand career his, and fortune, perhaps love ; now, comparatively a beggar, with life to begin all over again.

He thought of Brant's arbitrary conduct, and felt that it was open to him to dispute his right, but pride seemed to forbid that—at any rate then. What more calm deliberation would do

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he could not say. But there was the invention—the great motor, surely he had a half-right in that! No: he felt that he had not. Everything had been done in Dalton's name; Dalton had sold it; and he, the inventor, had thought of nothing but bringing it to perfection. The business arrangements had all been Dalton's, and the negotiations with Government in his behalf.

'I'll think no more,' he said at last, 'or I shall go mad,' and he was about to make for the station and go east to the little Inn, but almost involuntarily his steps led him in another direction, northward through the Green Park, across Piccadilly, and into the quiet repose of Mayfair.

He must see the house, he told himself, for love and pity were strong and masterful now. He would only see the darkened windows. He dare not call: it would, he felt, be an outrage; but he must pass. Who could say but that if she cared for him she might not feel something of the bond of sympathy between them?

He passed twice with the feeling of despair upon him greater than he could bear. It was as he had pictured—the great mansion with every window blank and dead-looking; and yet within it still the very soul of his smitten life.

He walked on mechanically, avoiding people by instinct, seeing nothing but the interior of Dalton's darkened chamber, hearing nothing, not even the wheels of a carriage, and the trampling of horses keeping close to the kerb, and almost brushing him as he went on. Then the horses were checked, and there was a quick step behind him.

'Beg pardon, sir—my mistress—will you speak?'

Wynyan looked wonderingly at the servant in plain livery who had accosted him. Then he saw close behind a pair of handsome bays champing their bits, and scattering the foam, and beyond them a face projected from a brougham, and a little black gloved hand beckoning.

'Isabel Endoza,' he said to himself, and walked back eagerly. 'She would have news.'

The face was withdrawn, but he saw now that it was thickly veiled; and as he reached the carriage door, the hand was held out and clung to his, while a wave of emotion rose and choked all utterance as he heard sobbing, and a piteous voice murmured: 'Oh, Mr Wynyan—oh, Mr Wynyan! Poor, poor Rénée!'

'Hush!' he whispered, as he stood holding the hand which still clung to his. Then hurriedly: 'Pray—pray tell me how she is.'

'I—I can't talk to you here. I have just come from the house. I—Tell the servant to open the door. Come in: come home with me. If I speak now, I shall cry so that every one will hear.'

As she spoke she signed to the footman; the

door was opened, and, hardly knowing what he did, Wynyan entered; the door was closed; he heard the word 'Home!' and then they were being driven rapidly through the streets with his companion leaning back in the corner of the luxurious carriage, holding her handkerchief to her face beneath her veil. At the end of a few minutes it was removed, but the veil kept down.

'You will come home with me, Mr Wynyan. Papa said I was to ask you to one of our evenings; but there will be no evenings now for a long, long time. Perhaps he will be at home. We only heard an hour ago, and papa is heart-broken, for he loved Mr Dalton: the grandest Englishman, he said, that he had ever met.'

'This is no time for paying visits, Miss Endoza,' said Wynyan coldly. 'Pray, tell me: how is your friend?'

'Don't—don't, pray, don't ask me here,' cried Isabel, bursting out, weeping loudly. 'I—I will tell you as soon as I can.'

Just then, Wynyan was conscious of a handsome, middle-aged Jewish-looking man cantering by the brougham, and bending low to raise his hat before dropping back.

'Yes, I see you—you dreadful stupid man,' said Isabel, quickly returning the bow.—'It is a friend of papa's. He is always watching for the carriage, so that he may bow.'

Wynyan hardly heard her, and there was silence till the carriage drew up at one of the great mansions in Victoria Street near to the Abbey.

'Please come and let me tell you,' said Isabel.

Hardly knowing what he was doing, Wynyan handed his companion out, and followed her into the hall and up the blank stone staircase to the first floor, where his companion touched the electric bell.

'It seems no use to ride up in the lift such a little way,' she said as the door flew open, and the chilly blankness of the staircase gave place to a luxuriously furnished entry; and the next minute they were in a long drawing-room, dimly lighted, and with the noise of the great street deadened by double windows.

Here Isabel tore off her veil and gloves, threw herself into a lounge, buried her face in her hands, and burst into a passion of sobs and wails so wildly hysterical that Wynyan became at last startled, and advanced to her to speak imploringly.

'Miss Endoza, pray, pray, do not give way like this,' he cried.

'My poor, dear, darling Rénée. Oh, it is too dreadful. What shall I do?—what shall I do?'

The wild fit of grief, however, was not lasting, and soon after the pretty little creamy face, with its great dark piteous-looking eyes, was turned up to Wynyan.

'Oh, do, do, please, sit down,' she cried. 'It is so good of you to come when you—we are in such trouble.'

Wynyan sank into the chair she pointed to, and sat frowning and stern as the girl liberally used her handkerchief.

'I—I am better now,' she said, with a sob

coming at intervals, as if the storm of passionate grief had been like herself, tropical but short. 'Papa came and told me just as I was going for a drive. Dear, dear Mr Dalton, he was always so good, and seemed to love me as if I were his own. I—I went there directly, Mr Wynyan, for I knew she would see me, poor darling, and we cried together till dearest Miss Bryne begged me to go, and I had just come away when I saw you.'

'How is she?' said Wynyan huskily.

'Broken-hearted, but so pale and beautiful. Oh, how I love her, my own sweet, dearest friend. Isn't it terrible, Mr Wynyan?'

He bowed his head; he could not speak. One moment he was angry with the shallow, frivolous creature; the next, pitying and sympathetic, for she had been there not half an hour back, held Rénee sobbing in her arms; and she did, she must love her, to show such grief.

'I knew how terribly grieved you would be, Mr Wynyan; it is such a relief to talk to some one who knows and loves her. Oh, my poor, poor darling friend!'

Isabel burst into another paroxysm of weeping, in the midst of which Wynyan started. He was conscious of some one having approached silently over the thick carpet, for he had not heard a sound.

'So good of you to call, my dear Mr Wynyan,' said the Count, holding out both hands to press them upon the young Englishman's shoulder. 'Friendliness is so welcome at a time of pain like this. Forgive my dearest child for her grief. She is, as you English call it, broken-hearted about her friend.—She weeps, too, for our noble-hearted Dalton, Mr Wynyan,' he added, as he sank into a chair near the visitor. 'I have lost a friend I loved. And you?—

'The man who has been to me as a father, sir,' said Wynyan, in a voice husky from emotion.

Isabel sobbed gently.

'Ah,' said the Count gravely. 'These losses are, as you say, irreparable. I made a friend, a trusted friend, of Robert Dalton, and he has gone. The greater reason why those left to us should be drawn closer together. Not a good Catholic, Mr Wynyan. My people would call him a heretic. But I love such opponents of our Church. A true gentleman, sir.'

'As ever breathed,' said Wynyan.

'He loved my child.'

'Yes—yes—yes,' sobbed Isabel wildly.

'As we love him and his. Ah, well, life is short. There is so little time to mourn in this busy world.—And you, Mr Wynyan, of course you will take the lead with the great business. I must do my duty to my country. There is a great transaction I must see you about.'

'You will not see me, sir,' said Wynyan gravely. 'Mr Brant Dalton will, I presume, be the principal now. My connection with the firm has been severed.'

'Indeed!' said the Count with a look meant to be one of surprise. 'I am grieved to hear that. But you, Mr Wynyan, with your skill as an engineer, must have the choice of more than you can undertake.'

'I don't know, sir,' said Wynyan, rising with

a bitter smile. 'We shall see. I have much to think about and do, sir. I thank Miss Endoza for giving me tidings of Miss Dalton.' 'Ah, yes, she has been. You could not call at present?'

'Nor in future, sir,' said Wynyan sadly.

'But you will call here, Mr Wynyan. I shall be so glad to speak to you about our dear friend. My child, too, will have news—she will be so much with poor Rénee. My house is at your disposal, sir, and you will be very welcome.'

'Must you go—so soon?' said Isabel with a piteous look, as she held out both her hands.

Wynyan bowed once more.

'I shall tell dearest Rénee that you called, and when you come next I shall have so much to say. Good—good-bye.'

She sank back sobbing again, as her father rang and then accompanied his visitor to the door.

'Good-bye, Mr Wynyan,' he said, shaking hands impressively. 'Pray call again soon. I may not be at home, but my child here will have news for you, I know.'

Wynyan went down pleased, and yet angry. He could not feel that it was all real, and yet he told himself that it must be.

'Foreigners are not so calm and impassive as we are. Would he make me so welcome if he knew that I am little better than a beggar?'

In the great drawing-room he had so lately left, Villar Endoza was walking slowly up and down with a memorandum book in one hand, a gold pencil-case in the other.

'Yes, my child, it is very sad; but men will die even in our sunny land.—But your face looks terrible.'

'Yes, little papa; but I am going to bathe it with some wash. Poor, dearest Rénee did cry so all over it.'

'Of course—of course,' said the Count.—'He would be invaluable to us. He must come.'

'I thought you said Mr Brant must come, little papa,' said the girl, dabbing her red eyes.

'Yes, little one; but Dalton had not died then. This man is worth five thousand Brants, and now he is ours. I knew it would be so, as soon as I heard the bad news.'

'Knew what, little papa?'

'That Brant would send him away.'

'But how could you know so soon?'

The Count laughed.

'How do I know so many things, little one?' he said.

'I know,' she cried, 'that nasty Señor Levvinson tells you. Oh, how I hate him!' she cried excitedly, with her eyes flashing and her prettily curved lips drawn from her pearly teeth.

'My beautiful little bird must not hate anybody,' said the Count, stopping to tap her cheek with the gold pencil. 'She must smile and be kind, even to Mr Levvinson while he serves me well.'

'Very well, little papa,' she said, pouting.

'That is my good little angel,' he said playfully. 'Now go and bathe the beautiful eyes.—Look.' He drew her forward so that she could see her face in the nearest mirror, and she uttered a cry of alarm.

'Almost too bad to show the brave, hand-some young Wyndham, eh?—There; go to your room, sweet one. I have so much to think and write.'

STOWAWAYS.

In future, stowaways discovered on board British ships will be more adequately punished when taken before a magistrate than hitherto. It has been found that, just as there are vagrants on land, so they abound on the sea. Under section two hundred and fifty-eight of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1854, it was provided that if a person secreted himself and went to sea in a ship without consent, he was liable to a penalty not exceeding twenty pounds, or to imprisonment, without or with hard labour, for any period not exceeding four weeks. This short term of incarceration, however, seemed to have no deterrent effect. If the matter is considered for one moment, it will readily be seen that light sentences for such an offence only tended to fit prisoners for another voyage under similar conditions. Arriving in port after a long and probably stormy trip, the professional stowaway would hardly care to ship himself off again at once. His previous mode of obtaining a livelihood would unfit him for getting one so easily on shore; so Her Majesty's prison for a week or two was a perfect Eldorado to such a being. It prepared him to follow his peculiar calling with renewed vigour.

This is no fanciful picture, as shipowners have found to their cost. For years, complaints were continually being lodged by shipowners before the authorities in London, Southampton, Liverpool, and Greenock, respecting the lenient way in which persons who had defrauded them of their passage-money were dealt with by law. Many of the rogues were allowed to go free, in order to avoid the expense of a prosecution which resulted in so little. Not only did the shipowners have to pay the costs of the prosecution, but witnesses had to be brought from the ship at considerable trouble and expense. Even then, the magistrate was often not satisfied with the evidence as to 'secretion,' in which case the prisoner invariably got discharged from custody.

Now, however, matters are somewhat improved in this respect. By section three hundred and thirteen of the Merchant Shipping Act of 1894, the powers of magistrates are extended, and, as one stowaway has already found to be the case, can be sentenced to three months' hard labour. In this instance the prosecution was undertaken by the Castle Line, running steamships between London and the Cape. They have suffered a good deal at the hands of the free travelling fraternity for a long time past. Indeed, only a few months ago, a stowaway who managed to escape the punishment he so well merited, on a technical point, had the audacity, two days after his dismissal, to apply to the same magistrate in London for a summons against the owners of the vessel, whom he had defrauded to the extent of sixteen guineas, plus the costs of the prose-

cution, for detaining a box of tools belonging to him. The applicant was referred to the County Court.

An excellent illustration is on record, showing what a number of voyages can be made by one stowaway within a comparatively short space of time. The individual in question began at Glasgow, and concealed himself on a boat about to start for Liverpool. Upon reaching that place, he shipped himself on a liner bound for Boston, Massachusetts. This vessel had to bring him back again, by direction of the United States officials. The cause of this will be explained later on. Again, an Atlantic liner was patronised; but he was discovered at Queenstown. Some of the passengers, pitying his wretched appearance when brought on deck, subscribed sufficient money to pay the culprit's passage to New York. Two or three more times he managed to reach Liverpool, subsequently having his fare paid, before again reaching American ports.

This game, however, got played out, and he set out for the Far West, travelling as usual free of expense. Arriving at San Francisco, he stowed himself away on a ship loading for Melbourne. Thence he got to Yokohama, Shanghai, Hong-kong, Singapore, Calcutta, Bombay, Port Said, and Malta. At each place he landed, and travelled by another vessel. At Malta, this enterprising stowaway actually concealed himself on board a British warship—H.M.S. *Serapis*. At Port Said he was conveyed ashore, and given into the hands of the British Consul with instructions to send him to England. This was done; and in due course the prisoner was brought up at a London police court, where, being remanded, all the foregoing facts were elicited. Were the incidents not so well authenticated, it would be very difficult to credit such a story.

In addition to being a nuisance and expense, stowaways incur great danger of a violent death. In one instance a man hid himself away in a chain locker, and when the anchor was hove-up, the unfortunate creature was crushed to death, the noise made by the steam winch and the rattling of the chain drowning his cries. Upon another occasion, a man was found dead under the main hatch of one of the National Line of steamers. He had concealed himself before the vessel left Liverpool, and died of suffocation. Curiously enough, in his pocket was found a novel entitled *Doomed on the Deep*. In a third case, a man hid himself in the forepart of a steamer bound for London. While proceeding up the river Thames, she collided with another steamer, and the stowaway was crushed to death.

With regard to vessels in the American trade, the hardships that have to be borne by captains having the misfortune to be patronised by stowaways are very great. Should one succeed in landing, upon arriving at any of the United States ports, the captain is liable to a fine of one thousand dollars. When a stowaway is found, the authorities have to be informed of the fact directly port is reached. He is then taken ashore, and maintained at the vessel's expense until she is ready to return, when he is conveyed on board again, and has to be taken

whence he came. The singular number is used in the foregoing, but that is usually exceeded. In August 1891, forty-five stowaways were discovered on board the steamer *Hightington*, when on a voyage from Liverpool to Galveston. Fortunately, this was done in time to enable part being landed in the Mersey, and the remainder at Waterford—for they were found in two batches. Last November, several sets, varying from five to sixteen in number, were returned from America in the manner already described.

Stowaways are very common in the East, and many as well as curious dodges are resorted to by natives—well able to pay the passage-money—in order to obtain a trip for nothing. Thus, in June last, six Japanese girls packed up in matting were removed from the Japan mail steamer before leaving Nagasaki for Shanghai. In April of the same year, nine Japanese men and one woman stowed themselves away on a vessel sailing from Yokohama to San Francisco, and of course had to be taken back again. Eight Chinamen concealed themselves on a steamer trading between Penang and Rangoon. When found, the captain had them all well flogged; and upon reaching port, each one received from the magistrate a month's 'rigorous' imprisonment.

The days of the stowaway—so far as this country is concerned—are numbered. Three months' hard labour is too long a spell of industry for such folk. Gradually they will become extinct, and the sooner this comes to pass the better.

HOW THE MAN-EATER WAS KILLED.

LIEUTENANT WALLACE, of the 42d Bengal Native Infantry, sat moody in his bungalow. He had reason to be moody, if, indeed, love and reason ever run in a curriole. But the immediate cause of his moodiness was the following cruelly courteous foolscap letter: 'SIR—I have the honour to inform you that I have complied with your request, by placing your name on the list of candidates for the vacant post in the Jungle Reclamation Office, where it stands No. 315. Pray, refer to that number in any further communication you may desire to make.'

'Further communication be big D-d,' exclaimed the young officer as he flung the sheet of foolscap into the fireplace.

'What's up now?' cried his bosom friend, Wilford Bosanquet, bursting in upon him without ceremony.

'Oh! confound it! Only the old tale.—Any news?'

'Nothing newer than what would be stale enough to anybody but a moping owl like you. But of course nobody—no rational being—would expect *you* to know what every one else was talking about the day before yesterday. Queen Anne's dead!'

The lieutenant deigned not to notice this little speech; and his friend ran on: 'So is another post-runner—that's the sixth that the

man-eater has eaten within the last nine months, according to the general reckoning. And there's a deuce of a difficulty in finding anybody to take his place. So we seem likely to be as newsless as even you could desire in this God-forsaken hole. No letters, no newspapers, no nothing. Meanwhile, Collector Campbell has issued a handbill offering a reward of three thousand rupees to any wight who'll bring him the tiger's skin.'

'Why not?' murmured the lieutenant with knitted brow. 'What does it matter?'

'I'll see if I can't wake him,' muttered Wilford Bosanquet to himself. Then aloud: 'As you seem to think so lightly of the death of nine post-runners, and heaven knows how many harmless natives to boot, what say you to Lucy Campbell's coming marriage?—

'Lucy's marriage—to *whom?*' broke in Wallace fiercely. 'If to the man of her choice'—Here he mumbled something which his friend failed to catch. 'But if they're going to force her into wedding old Colonel Graybeard, or that loathsome sneak, Tom Wilson with his five thousand a year, I'll murder 'em both.'

'In for a penny, in for a pound, eh?' quoth Captain Bosanquet. 'Else I might remind you that to slaughter the *one* who wins her would suffice. She can't wed both.—But I thought I'd rouse you. And I've done it. Any one would swear that you are the tiger's kin—his next of kin. Can't you see that I'm joking?'

'Ay, *your* jokes are obvious enough—and always in good taste, I must say,' retorted the love-sick lieutenant.

'Come, old man, don't be riled. You know—at least I do—that though Lucy Campbell may be loth to leave her parents in the lurch, and be yours on next-to-nothing a year and hope, she won't be anybody else's, though he had fifty thousand pounds a year. Old Graybeard and Wilson are not the *only* fellows who've tried their luck in that quarter, and found little cause to boast of the upshot, let me tell you.'

This singularly generous confession of defeat—and that from the lips of the heir to forty thousand acres yielding twenty thousand pounds a year—thoroughly restored Wallace to his wonted good-humour, and did something towards dissipating his gloom. But it did nothing to damp his determination to go forth and do battle with the man-eater—a determination which had voiced itself unconsciously to him, and to the sore bewilderment of his friend, in those cross-purpose questions of his, 'Why not?' and 'What does it matter?'

The question now arose, should he go forth alone, or borrow his rich friend's *shikarri*—a word one feels tempted to translate 'gamekeeper.' Only, the game are tigers, and such-like 'fearful wild-fowl'; and the preserves, the jungle. He

resolved to borrow that wily native, whom his friend willingly lent.

'But, old fellow,' he added, 'is it worth while to risk your life for the sake of a paltry three hundred pounds?'

'Oh! I'm not thinking of the gold,' said Wallace. 'But I want to be up doing something, instead of sticking here in the mud.'

'Well, there's a little cash and a good deal of *kudos* in the case. And the man who rid the country of that pest would be a real public benefactor. I've half a mind to go with you, if you'll let me.'

Here Wallace began to hem and haw. And his friend perceiving there was some objection—maybe a disinclination to share the harvest of renown to be reaped by the tiger's destruction—did not press the matter, but promised to send the shikari, and bade his friend good-morning.

'The fact is,' said Wallace as he followed Bosanquet on to the veranda which belted his modest bungalow, 'my plan hardly admits of a coadjutor, though I may need help in case all goes well.'

'You know best; though your speech is dark to me, I confess. But Murreem Ali will be a far better henchman than I. So ta-ta. Take care of yourself, and God speed you!' So saying, the captain walked away, boding no ill to his friend. For many an officer had been out to shoot the pest, and came home safe and sound without having seen so much as the tip of its tail. The tiger seemed thoroughly well aware of the difference between a poor post-runner armed only with his stick of tinkling bells, and a sportsman armed with a rifle warranted to kill at half a mile.

By the time Murreem Ali joined him, Charlie Wallace had donned a post-runner's red coat, bought for the occasion, and darkened his face to a more than native swarthiness by a liberal outlay of burnt cork. The shikari, who came armed with a rifle and a pair of pistols, stared to behold the lieutenant in this strange guise; but never a word spoke he except to counsel his temporary master to stick a pair of pistols in his belt. 'Like servant, like Saheeb!' he added with a grin which displayed a highly serviceable set of grinders. 'Baby gun help at a pinch,' he said, 'when big gun bark, no bite.'

To avoid needlessly advertising their intent to all the neighbourhood, they stole out the back way, and reached the high-road through a lonely and roundabout path. For some five miles they jogged on at a good brisk pace till they reached a turn in the road within a stone's throw of the vast jungle haunted by the man-eater. Here the lieutenant begged his attendant to fall behind, lest the beast, seeing two men armed to the teeth, should fight shy of them, as he had of other bold sportsmen. The veteran shikari shook his head, but held his tongue, knowing that it behoved him to obey orders. His master for the nonce then drew out a bunch of little bells and tied them to the muzzle of his rifle, so as to make it look as like a post-runner's bell-stick as might be. He then hastened forward at a post-runner's jogtrot pace, the bells jingling merrily as he went. His heart meanwhile was none too

merry. For though resolved to go through with what he had begun, he could not help reflecting that, if his ruse succeeded, the animal might spring out upon him at any moment from either side of the thick covert that lined his route. However, on he fared without mishap till he reached the very spot where the tiger had pounced on his last victim. This was a gully that crossed the road at right angles, and was now dry as a chip, though a foaming torrent during the rainy season—from mid May till mid August.

As to the identity of the spot he could not doubt it for a moment. For there, cruelly convincing, a few drops of the victim's blood still stained the white pebbles of the gully. And, truth to tell, the sight of them made Charlie Wallace's blood—all young and warm though it was—turn somewhat cold for a moment. Here he halted and looked around him. He saw the flanks of the gully and both sides of the road thickly shagged with brushwood, while the tall forest trees that towered above it quite shut out the rays of the setting sun. Meanwhile, all was still as the grave. And no sign of life could he see. As he stood in that narrow gloomy gorge, he felt as if entombed alive. The stillness awed him. He shifted his rifle. The bells jingled; and ere that sound had fairly died away, another smote his ear—a faint rustling in the brushwood, followed by the crackling of dry leaves and twigs. Quick as lightning, he raised his rifle, and fired it full in the face of the tiger as it balanced itself on the verge of the gully in act to spring. Down it rolled into the bed of the gully, and there lay for a moment as if stunned. But, speedily recovering its feet, it crouched for second spring; and with one loud, hoarse, grating growl, it came bounding through the air towards its prey, who stood with a pistol in either hand, and fired both point-blank, then fell stricken to the ground—he knew not how.

Not then. No, nor till half an hour afterwards, when he came to himself, and found Murreem Ali stooping over him, pawnee-flask in hand.

'What's become of the tiger?' he gasped as soon as he could command his tongue.

'Devil-tiger, tiger-devil—he lie yonder, Saheeb, dead as door-nail,' answered the shikari, jerking his thumb over his shoulder.

'Why, the devil, as you call him, must have knocked me down, and then shot clean over me. And then you came up and shot *him*?'

'No me shoot devil. Saheeb shoot devil,' replied the honest shikari. 'When Murreem Ali came up, he find devil as dead as door-nail. Slug go neat into his right eye, and spirit-devil come out of him through hole.'

'And what's to be done now? For I feel in no plight to trudge back ten miles. Besides, I should like to take the game home with me. Know you of any village near where we could hire a bullock-cart?'

'Sumootra just two mile off, close to road,' replied Ali. 'Find plenty bullock-cart and bullock there. And all for nothing. No rupee. Folk only too glad to do anything for Saheeb who kill the tiger-devil.'

'Then I must ask you to test their goodwill,' replied Charlie Wallace.

The man sped off like a hare with the hounds at its tail. And after the lapse of half an hour, a confused roar as of many voices proclaimed his return with half the village at his heels. While one hoary-headed patriarch fell flat on his belly at the tiger-queller's feet, and worshipped him for slaying the plague of the village, who had swallowed three of his grandsons and others of his more distant kinsfolk, the rest of the villagers crowded round their fallen foe, showering kicks and curses on it before they hoisted the carcass into the cart. Anon, up came the village priest to appease its wandering spirit, and also its protecting deity, Kali, Goddess of Mischief to Mankind. He brought with him for this purpose a pot of red paint, wherewith he smeared the tiger's head and also the barrel of the pistol that laid him low. Other villagers, meanwhile, kept flocking to the scene of action, bringing all sorts of meat and drink offerings to their deliverer—bananas, milk, wild honey, maize-cakes—some of which, especially the bananas and the milk, he found exceedingly grateful to his parched palate. And then, instead of cursing and kicking the tiger, they propped it up in the cart as if it still lived, and decked it with a garland of wild-flowers gathered in the neighbouring jungle, and built over it an arbour of leafy boughs, and greeted it with the music of tomtoms and horns.

Meanwhile, the lieutenant seated himself in the cart—the shikarri by his side—under the shadow, so to speak, of his victim's tail. And then the cart, thus metamorphosed into a kind of triumphal car, moved slowly from the scene of slaughter, headed by the villagers, who marched, or rather danced in front to the sound of horn and tomtom. And though darkness soon overtook them, they were lighted on their journey by more villagers, who joined them with lighted torches in their hands.

Thus conveyed and thus escorted, the hero and idol of the day neared headquarters. He was within a mile of them, when a horseman came galloping across the open fields and overtook the cart. 'What's agate now?' he shouted with a cheery and manly voice, which forthwith prepossessed the lieutenant in his favour. At that moment a second horseman rode up; and after some whispering between them, the first set spurs to his horse and rode rapidly forward. The second stayed and chatted with the lieutenant till the cart drew up in front of his bungalow. There, with a hasty *Au revoir* to its owner, the second horseman took himself off, leaving the lieutenant not a little puzzled as to who these distinguished foreigners—foreign to that station—might be.

Mid the excitement of his tussle with the tiger and the stir and bustle of his triumphant return, Charlie Wallace had clean forgotten the disguise he had donned to lure the tiger from his lair. But the sight of his grimy face in the looking-glass suddenly reminded him how queer a figure he must have cut in the eyes of the inquisitive cavaliers. He had scarcely washed off the war-paint and donned his ordinary 'togs,' when his factotum entered with a

note addressed to him in the familiar hand of Collector Campbell, Lucy's father! He tore it open and read, with mingled astonishment and rapture: 'The Governor-general, wishing to thank Lieutenant Wallace for his public service this day done, begs the pleasure of his company at dinner at my table. Eight sharp! Come just as you are—Yours faithfully, HECTOR CAMPBELL.'

'What next?' cried our friend gleefully. But he lacked time for the expression of his feelings. He had barely time to give himself an extra brush-up before presenting himself to those eyes—not Lord Mayo's—which had been his lodestars ever since they first smiled on him.

He reached the door of the roof that sheltered her and the Governor-general just—and only just—in time to save his reputation for punctuality. Naturally, his lordship led the way to the dining-room with Mrs Campbell. As naturally, the aide-de-camp—*Mr Au revoir*—followed with Lucy. Hence Charlie Wallace grumbled not at having to bring up the rear with her father, especially when he found himself seated straight in front of her, with no envious *épergne* to debar him from gazing his fill. The reader may deem it strange that he felt perfectly at ease in the presence of the Governor-general. But the fact is that Lord Mayo was a perfect master of the art—if art it be—of making people feel at home with him. On this occasion he laid himself out, without any show of effort, to draw Charlie out. And he succeeded so thoroughly, that the young man caught himself repeating, to his lordship, 'across the walnuts and the wine,' that confoundedly polite form of refusal, 'Sir, I have the honour to inform you, &c.,' which he vowed he had seen so often that he knew it by heart.

Charlie spent a most delightful evening, the more so because Lord Mayo carefully omitted to mar it by formally thanking him for his public services. He was a man who cared more for substance than for form. And so Charlie found next morning when, as he sat at breakfast, his factotum brought him a letter to this effect: 'DEAR SIR—I have the honour to inform you that I have forestalled any request on your part by entering your name on the list of candidates for the vacant post in the Green Cloth Office, where it stands at the head of the list. All good luck to you! Yours sincerely, MAYO.'

'What a trump!' cried Charlie in his joy, and was rushing off hatless to Lucy's father's bungalow to pour forth his hearty thanks, when his friend Captain Bosanquet caught him by the coat-tail and asked him, 'Madman, whither away?'

The madman tore himself free at the cost of his coat, and forged ahead, but only to run bolt into the arms of aide-de-camp *Au revoir!* who briefly informed him that Lord Mayo had quitted the bungalow at five A.M., after a cup of black coffee and a hard biscuit, and that he—*Au revoir*—was to rejoin him that evening at the bungalow of Collector Munro, twenty-five miles farther north.

A twelvemonth later, Collector Campbell resigned, and sailed for England with his wife.

But Lucy stayed in India—Lucy still, but Campbell no longer. That name she had swapped for that of Old Scotland's darling hero, of whom she thought highly, and still more highly of ours.

G R E A T A U K G O S S I P .

One hundred and eighty guineas realised for a single egg; three hundred and fifty for a stuffed specimen: these are the prices that have to be paid if a museum or an ornithologist would become the proud possessor of an egg and skin of the Great Auk or Garefowl. An announcement of the approaching sale of relics relating to this bird, such as that which recently took place in London, at once creates excitement in the minds of collectors, and, curiously enough, almost equal interest among those who usually care little about objects dear to the hearts of museum curators. Rare as are the remains of the Garefowl—there being, according to Mr Symington Grieve, a leading authority on this subject, fewer than seventy eggs and eighty skins all told—the romantic stories told of finds, lucky bargains, and other Garefowl lore, would fill, nay, have filled volumes. Although £189 seems an absurd sum to give for the egg of even the bird itself, yet in reality, compared with the prices paid by some purchasers of these eggs, the amount would be reckoned an extremely moderate one. For other eggs have often realised very much more than this. Early in 1894 an egg was sold for the unprecedented sum of 300 guineas, undoubtedly a very full price for even a perfect and beautifully marked specimen, though the fact that this egg had been in the possession of Mr Yarrell, the eminent ornithologist, and had a pedigree of almost a century, undoubtedly enhanced its value. This particular egg has an interesting history, Mr Yarrell having acquired it by one of those lucky chances which only occur once in a lifetime. Early in the present century, he happened to be walking on the sands at Boulogne, when he met a fishwoman carrying some sea-mews' eggs. He followed the woman to her house, and there saw hanging on a string four wild swans' eggs, and with them one of the Great Auk, all of which he purchased for the sum of ten francs. After Mr Yarrell's death in 1856, this egg was sold to Mr Bond for £21. Baron Louis d'Hamonville bought Mr Bond's collection in 1875, and it is a specimen lately the property of this nobleman which has just realised 180 guineas. The egg which brought the splendid price of 300 guineas also came from the same source, but there appears to be a doubt as to which of these two eggs was the one that cost Mr Yarrell two francs. Later in 1894, a perfect egg sold for £273, and a damaged specimen realised as much as £183. Since 1888, the price—but this includes all eggs sold, perfect and imperfect—has varied from £239 to about £280.

It seems strange that America, which only possesses two out of a total of sixty-eight eggs which exist, the remainder being in Europe, should not so far have come to the front, to

enrich her museums with a few more of these rare specimens.

It is interesting to trace the rise in value of these eggs during the past thirty years. In 1865 Mr Stevens sold four specimens which fetched an average price of £30, 12s. 6d. each. In 1869 the same firm sold an egg from the collection of Dr Troughton for £64, and in 1895 an egg from the collection of Baron D'Hamonville for £173.

Several of the eggs in the late Mr Champlay's collection have an interesting history. The first one he obtained indirectly in 1859 through an inquiry concerning the egg which had belonged to Mr Yarrell. The inquiry was heard of by a dealer in Leipzig, who ultimately sold a beautifully shaped egg to Mr Champlay for £18. This egg came originally from Iceland along with six others. Egg No. 3 was decidedly a lucky bargain. While travelling in Italy in 1861, Mr Champlay visited the Pavia Museum of Anatomy, and noticed in a glass case several large eggs covered with dust and dirt. He thought that one egg was that of the Great Auk, and, after cleaning the egg, his surmise was found to be correct. This egg was part of a collection one hundred years old. Mr Champlay told the chief Director there was among the eggs one of 'Le Grand Penguin,' and offered five napoleons, or an equivalent exchange; money was preferred, and he borrowed the amount from a friend to pay for it. The egg turned out well marked and perfect. Four other eggs in this collection cost £11, 5s. each in 1864; the remainder varying in price from £24 to £30.

Skins of the Great Auk are still more valuable than eggs, but the number of transactions has been very much fewer; in fact, it is believed the last one previous to the sale this year took place in 1869. This had belonged to Dr Troughton, and brought £94, 10s. The Edinburgh Museum had an opportunity of acquiring one in 1870 for £100, but the offer was declined. However, in 1895 a fine specimen was secured for 350 guineas. The Great Auk preserved in the Natural History Museum of Central Park, New York, cost £130 in 1868. Previous to this the value rapidly declines, so to speak, as in 1860 Mr Champlay bought a skin and an egg for £45. It is safe to say they would fetch ten times as much now. The skin possessed by Mr Malcolm of Poltalloch, Lochgilphead, N.B., is thought to have cost originally about the year 1840 only two or three pounds. Mr Bullock's Great Auk, sent to him from Papa-Westra, Orkney, was after his death sold in the year 1819 for £15, 5s. 6d., and this although it was a genuine British specimen, and therefore almost if not quite unique in this respect. Yet—and this must close the summary of prices—the value of a skin in 1834 was only about £8—truly, *tempora mutantur*.

In addition to their costliness, the eggs of the Great Auk are extremely interesting on account of their intrinsic beauty. Mr Edward Bidwell has photographed sixty-four out of the sixty-six European specimens, and obtained representations of some of them from several points of view, to better display their peculiar markings. No two of these eggs are exactly

alike, and many vary to a remarkable extent, albeit in a less degree than do those of the guillemot. As a rule, the eggs are not unlike in character those of the Razor-bill (*Alca torda*), and are somewhat sparingly spotted with dark-brown blotches in an irregular manner, chiefly at the larger end. A very rare type, an example of which is in the Liverpool Museum, is beautifully streaked all over, there being a very slight tendency to blotching near the larger end. One of the two in the Edinburgh Museum may be called an intermediate type, the other an ordinary type; both are beautiful specimens.

Probably the peculiar fascination the relics of the Garefowl have for the non-scientific mind is sufficiently explained by their great rarity. Charles Kingsley has already told us of that undiscovered islet Allalonestone, where dwells 'the last of the Gairfowl,' dreaming of the past glories of its race! Vain hope! for a hundred years past the Great Auk has been the rarest of rare birds, and during the past fifty, every possible rocky nook has been ransacked to discover, perchance, its skeleton or detached bones. Arctic expeditions, as well as specially equipped scientific ones, while securing remains, have done no more than confirm oral testimony handed down to aged fishermen by their fathers and grandfathers, that while once the Great Auk was very common, since the beginning of the century it has been very scarce. Contrary to generally received opinion, this bird did not reside within the Arctic Circle, nor had it a very circumscribed range. No farther back than the seventeenth century it was plentiful along the Atlantic seaboard from Massachusetts northwards as far as South Greenland, Iceland, and the north-west coasts and islands of Europe. Its abundance in some places can be realised, when we are told that early mariners drove them literally in shoals across sails stretched between their vessels and the shore, and that they were packed and salted like herrings in barrels, forming the principal food of fishermen visiting the banks of Newfoundland. In this way the Great Auk played an important part in encouraging the colonisation of these regions, and in the development of their fisheries.

There is some difference of opinion as to whether the Garefowl was ever abundant around the shores of Britain and the adjacent islands, or whether it should be more correctly described as a visitor. The fact may, however, quite well be that it was only a visitor in more recent historic times after the large colonies of the birds had been immensely reduced in numbers, and still have existed in multitudes in the prehistoric period. This much on the point at least is certain: the quantity of its remains found in the Danish 'kitchen-middens' proves that it formed food for the prehistoric inhabitants, and found in the coast of Denmark a congenial habitat. During Bullock's visit to the Orkneys in 1813, he fruitlessly pursued one of a pair bred in Papa-Westra for hours in a six-oared boat, though it was afterwards shot and sent to him. In 1821 a specimen was captured at St Kilda. Ireland, however, claims one so late as 1834, captured alive in a landing-net off the coast of Waterford.

There is some reason to believe that the last Great Auk in British seas was captured alive, kept a few days, and destroyed for a witch, on the Stack-an-Arnim, Isle of Boreray, St Kilda, between the years 1840-1843, by three St Kilda fowlers. This, if an actual fact, would be the final extermination so far as this country is concerned. It seems doubtful whether one of four strange birds shot by Brodtkorb in Norway, in 1848, was really a specimen of the Great Auk or not.

A Garefowl-skerry, famous in its day, was Eldey Island, lying some twenty-five miles to the south-west of Iceland, where, in June 1844, a pair of what are believed to have been the last two Great Auks were killed. These were the descendants of but a scattered remnant that had lingered on, as compared with the hosts that once existed at Funk Island, Newfoundland, which seems to have been a haunt peculiarly suited to their habits and mode of life. What an interesting monograph the missionary who lived in that part of Newfoundland not far from Funk Island in 1818-1823 might have written, had he been an ornithologist, for he saw the bird in considerable numbers, and the boys used to keep them tied by the leg as pets.

Exceedingly quaint and curious are the accounts given by the early voyagers of birds deemed in most instances Garefowl, though nearly always known by the term Penguins; in other instances, some peculiarities are so well defined that there can scarcely be any uncertainty. Doubtless the sea-fowl called by Baron Lahontan the Moyack was none other than the Great Auk. 'The Moyacks,' he says, 'are a sort of a fowl as big as a goose, having a short neck and a broad foot; and, which is very strange, their eggs are half as big again as a swan's, and yet they are all yellow, and that so thick that they must be diluted with water before they can be used as pancakes.' If this last point could be confirmed, it might prove the matter; but it may be feared that it is one of the things we shall never know. Perhaps the earliest mention of the Garefowl is by Hakluyt, who places the date at 1497. It is told of a party of gentlemen on a voyage to Newfoundland in 1536 that 'they came to the island of Penguins . . . whereon they landed, and found it full of great fowles, white and gray, and as big as geese, and they saw infinite number of their eggs.'

Ugly and ungainly as he may appear in the eyes of some, yet the Great Auk with his splendid plumage must have been in life a magnificent sea-fowl. There is something pathetic in the aspect of a bird so powerless to escape from or resist the assaults of man, and whose flesh and eggs afforded such irresistible spoil. Driven to isolated and remote skerries, deprived of the power of flight, a peculiarity only paralleled by the Penguins of the southern seas, laying but one solitary egg in the year, there is little wonder the Garefowl should have rapidly become extinct when once its favourite haunts had been discovered, which, unluckily for it, lay not far removed from teeming fishing-grounds. Yet, although it outlived its

epoch, and would be reckoned stupid in comparison with its more alert winged congeners, it need not be commiserated on its inability to fly, for no bird was ever more admirably suited to its environment. Awkward on land, and scarcely able to shuffle along without falling, remove him to his proper sphere, the ocean waste, and what a transformation scene ensues! The language of the poet, 'the courage of his wings,' acquires a new significance, for these hitherto useless members become powerful paddles, deftly aiding the strokes of his broad-flanged feet to drive him through the surging billows; the strong swimmer laughs at the rising gale, and outrides it in perfect security. It is on record, moreover, that his diving powers were little short of marvellous; small chance, indeed, would any finny denizen of the deep have to escape that arrowy pursuit and elude his powerful beak.

Does the Great Auk connect the present with a distant past when flightless avi-fauna was much more numerous, or does he, on the other hand, represent an aberrant type of bird, an example of degeneration, where the wings have become useless through disuse? There is one authority that could settle such questions beyond appeal, and that is the comparative anatomist; but the data are too scanty even for him to be quite certain. Nature, unfortunately, never repeats her creations—a type once gone is for ever lost. As we have said farewell long ago to the Dodo and the Solitaire, to mention no others, so the Garefowl has gone to join that great band of the creatures that have been; and the best we can now do is to preserve such relics as we have in our museums, making up for their scarcity by such devices as artistically executed casts of their skeletons and eggs.

Hence the recent acquisition of a perfectly preserved specimen of the Great Auk is an achievement of which the authorities of the Edinburgh Museum of Science and Art may be justly proud, and one on which they are entitled to great congratulation.

CORDITE AND ITS MANUFACTURE.

Of all the legion of explosive bodies which have been discovered during the present century, there is only one that can in any measure be considered a rival to gunpowder for use in guns, and that one is cordite, our British smokeless powder. The remainder are either too sensitive to allow of safe transport, or are too local in their action; and are entirely unfit to take the place occupied so long by the oldest of all explosives—gunpowder. Assuming, then, that for naval and military purposes a supply of either cordite or gunpowder is indispensable, the question arises—and it is one of considerable importance—Supposing our ports were blockaded for any lengthened period, and our supplies thus cut off, should we be able to maintain the necessary stock of explosives?

At present, we are entirely dependent upon foreign materials for the manufacture of these bodies. Of the ingredients used in making gun-

powder—namely, charcoal, sulphur, and nitre (potassium nitrate), the first-named is the only one obtained in this country, both the sulphur and nitre being imported. Similarly in the case of cordite, which is a mixture of gun-cotton, nitro-glycerine, and vaseline, we again rely upon foreign sources for the necessary materials. Thus the nitric acid used in making the nitro-glycerine and gun-cotton is all manufactured from sodium nitrate imported from Chili and Peru; the vaseline is obtained from the United States. It is well worth considering, then, what we should do if thrown by invasion upon our own resources, in order that the requisite substances might be produced in sufficient quantity.

On examining in detail the materials required to manufacture these explosives, it will be found that the chief difficulty would be to obtain a supply of the nitrogen compounds used—nitre in the case of gunpowder, and nitric acid in that of cordite. Taking gunpowder: the charcoal would always be forthcoming; sulphur—of which there are vast quantities locked up in our minerals—could be procured in abundance by resorting to chemical processes. Indeed, at the present time sulphur is one of the most important by-products at all alkali works where the Leblanc method is practised. Great attention has been bestowed upon the recovery of the sulphur from the alkali wastes, with the result that ninety-eight per cent. of the element present in the waste may now be recovered by modern processes. Scarcity of sulphur, therefore, need not be apprehended. But our production of nitre is absolutely nil; and it is to this constituent of gunpowder that attention would have to be devoted.

Coming to cordite, and taking its constituents separately: the gun-cotton is made from cotton waste by the action of nitric acid in the presence of concentrated sulphuric acid. In case of extremity, cotton rags of any description, or even fibres of wood, could be used instead of the cotton waste. The sulphuric acid is made from our own natural productions. The nitric acid—made from foreign sodium nitrate—would be the ingredient for the production of which efforts would have to be directed. So with nitro-glycerine, which is made by acting upon glycerine with nitric acid and strong sulphuric acid. Our soap-works could supply an abundance of glycerine; but we should again be faced with the necessity of making the nitric acid. The third body used in making cordite—namely, vaseline—could be replaced if necessary by some of the heavy oils obtained by distilling coal-tar or shale. So that in the case of our smokeless powder, as in that of gunpowder, the difficulty would be found in obtaining the nitrogen compound.

Even if some of the more feasible of the other explosives known could be pressed into service for use in our ordnance, the same contingency would still confront us, as nitric acid is essential to the manufacture of almost all of these. Thus, picric acid—variously known as melinite, lyddite, &c.—is made by acting upon phenol with nitric acid; nitro-benzene by treating benzene with nitric acid; and so on.

These two nitrogen compounds—nitre and

nitric acid—without which none of our explosives could be made, are easily convertible one into the other. Given either, the second could be readily produced; and if any means were known by which one of them could be obtained, the question would be solved. It would be interesting, therefore, to consider the possible ways by which this end could be secured.

In spite of the advances made in chemical science, we are as yet acquainted with only one process by which nitre may be made directly in useful quantities. It was adopted by the French during the Revolution, when their coasts were blockaded, and their supply of nitre for making powder ran short. No improvement or development has yet been made upon the simple though tedious method then used, which is as follows: Heaps of manure were allowed to rot in the dark for some months, after which the ashes of plants were scattered over the fermented heap, which was moistened occasionally with stable runnings. The white crust which appeared on the mass after a time—consisting chiefly of nitrates of calcium and magnesium—was removed, and boiled with potash lyes, upon which it decomposed, yielding an impure nitre, which was purified by recrystallising. Recently, Pasteur and Warington have investigated the formation of nitrates in manure-heaps, and have found that the nitrogen contained in the organic matter is converted into nitric acid by small organisms. When plant-ashes are placed on the mass, this nitric acid combines with the lime and magnesia present in the ashes, forming their respective nitrates.

This process is still in vogue in some European countries. Thus, in Sweden, where every landed proprietor is compelled to provide annually a quantity of nitre for the Government, this method is the one adopted; and almost all the nitre used in Switzerland is obtained by this means. We should be able, therefore, by a similar mode of procedure, to procure some of the nitre requisite, and from it the nitric acid.

Having regard, however, to the slowness of the method and the greater expenditure of explosives in modern warfare, it is doubtful whether sufficient material could be thus provided; and we should in all probability have to bring in the aid of other processes to serve as auxiliaries to the foregoing. Of these, notwithstanding the fact that the elements contained in nitric acid are present in limitless quantities in air and water, only two have been discovered, and each of these would require considerable development before any appreciable and useful quantity of the necessary nitrogen compounds could be produced by their means. The first of these depends on the fact, that when a hydrogen flame is burnt in a mixture of oxygen and air, some nitric acid is formed during the combustion. If this were performed on a large scale, there is little doubt that considerable quantities of nitric acid could be obtained, and from it the nitre could be made. But at the best, this process is cumbersome and expensive, and the quantity of nitric acid produced is very small in proportion to the amount of hydrogen consumed. It would certainly be the last method resorted to, unless it could be

vastly improved. Recently, however, an interesting means of producing nitric acid has been discovered by Crookes. It is undoubtedly capable of great extension, and if properly worked out, would in all probability supersede the present methods for making this acid. Crookes found that when a powerful, rapidly-alternating current of electricity was passed through a Tesla induction coil, the poles of which were placed beyond sparking distance, the air between the poles could be lighted like ordinary coal-gas, clouds of nitric acid vapour being produced by the burning. This discovery is of the greatest importance; and if the process were extended so as to work on a very large scale, there is no reason why a large supply of nitric acid could not be readily and cheaply obtained in this manner.

Such, then, are the methods, at present imperfect, upon which we should be compelled to rely in the event of a sustained invasion of our islands. It is to be hoped that in the near future either they will be made more expeditious, or some better means of producing the requisite nitrogen compounds will be devised, and so furnish these ingredients in such quantity that no drawback could possibly be experienced through lack of explosive materials under any circumstances.

THE DREAMER.

He loves to watch the waves at play
Leap up the rocks with ceaseless roar,
And see their snowy, showering spray
Dissolve in pearls along the shore.

The western sky is dear to him
When rosy day with twilight blends,
And on the ocean's purple rim
The sun, a globe of flame, descends.

The white clouds sailing in the blue,
The white stars peering through the night,
He loves, because they bring to view
The fringes of the infinite.

He hears the music of the skies,
The thunder's bass, the song of birds,
And vainly tries to crystallise
His soul's rich harmonies into words.

And wandering in the Autumn woods,
Far from the sight of human face,
His fancy fills the solitudes
With shapes of beauty and of grace.

What boots his idle dreams to those
Who with unconquerable will
Toil from the dawn till daylight's close
To keep the world from standing still?

He smiles, and says his dreaming tends
To show the beauty of design;
To shape men's lives to nobler ends,
And draw them nearer the Divine.

J. SCOTT.